

E-BOOK

“YOUR WORLD IS IN YOUR HANDS”

Literally. Lets embark on a ride from the darkest, unknown depths of our cerebellum (the portion of the human brain that coordinates movements of the muscles) to the fine, unique individual fingerprints that we all are blessed with, which believe it or not will be called upon for superior shooting service. This is just another very small way of just knowing that you are capable of reaching your maximum potential, and its all there within arm's reach, or right at your fingertips. Lets not confuse the cerebellum with the cerebrum which is the portion of the human brain that acts as the center of conscious thought, something that I will devote a whole chapter to as seen later in the book.

Before I continue I want to share a neat poem with you that sends a great message that focuses on the selected topic, your hands.

GRANDPA'S HANDS.

Grandpa, some ninety plus years sat feebly on the patio bench. He didn't move, just sat with his head down staring at his hands. When I sat down beside him he didn't acknowledge my presence and the longer I sat I wondered if he was OK.

Finally, not really wanting to disturb him but wanting to check on him at the same time, I asked him if he was OK.

He raised his head and looked at me and smiled. "Yes, I'm fine, thank you for asking," he said in a clear strong voice.

"I didn't mean to disturb you, Grandpa, but you were just sitting here staring at your hands and I wanted to make sure you were OK" I explained to him.

"Have you ever looked at your hands," he asked. I mean really looked at your hands?"

I slowly opened my hands and stared down at them. I turned them over, palms up and then palms down. No, I guess I had never really looked at my hands as I tried to figure out the point he was making. Grandpa smiled and related this story:

"Stop and think for a moment about the hands you have, how they have served you well, throughout your years. These hands, though wrinkled, shriveled and weak have been the tools I have used all my life to reach out and grab and embrace life.

They braced and caught my fall when as a toddler I crashed upon the floor. They put food in my mouth and clothes on my back.

As a child my Mother taught me to fold them in prayer.

They tied my shoes and pulled on my work boots.

They held my rifle and wiped my tears when I went off to war.

They have been dirty, scraped and raw, swollen and bent.

They were uneasy and clumsy when I tried to hold my newborn son.
Decorated with my wedding band they showed the world that I was married and loved someone special.
They wrote the letters home and trembled and shook when I buried my parents and spouse and walked my daughter down the aisle.
Yet, they were strong and sure when I dug my buddy out of a foxhole and lifted a plow off of my best friend's foot.
They have held children, consoled neighbors and shook in fists of anger when I didn't understand.
They have been sticky and wet, bent and broken, dried and raw.
And to this day when much of anything else of me works real well these hands hold me up, lay me down, and again continue to fold in prayer.
These hands are the mark of where I've been and all the ruggedness of my life.
But more importantly it will be these hands that God will reach out and take when he leads me home.
And with my hands He will lift me to His side and there I will use these hands to touch the face of Christ".

I will never look at my hands the same again. I remember God reached out and took my Grandpa's hands and led him home.
When my hands are hurt or sore or when I stroke the face of my children and wife I think of Grandpa. I know he has been stroked and caressed and held by the hands of God. I, too, want to touch the face of God and feel His hands upon my face.
Dee Smith.

Even though the above poem has spiritual references it relays a powerful message as to the significance of our hands.

You will learn more specifically the breakdown and accountability of specific fingers and hands and the role and duty that each has in the delivery of each and every free throw shot you shoot for the rest of your life.

Even after 4 decades of playing basketball and shooting the ball, what really amazes me is that every shot I take commands complete respect and conscious effort from the cerebrum. Especially the further I get from the basket. I know it sounds crazy but the moment I relax or start feeling cocky just because I may have made 50 or a hundred consecutive shots from any given point, this is no guarantee that the next shot will go in. And its' always the next shot that is the most important.

Concomitant with this, you need to know that my own shot has become a one thought process. Drum roll please.... And that is never to allow any of my extended fingers on the follow through move from right to left or more specifically to break the 'gun barrel plane' which is a straight line from the tip of my index finger to the shoulder joint and this should line up with the center of the rim. A great example of this is Reggie Miller. If you have ever seen him shoot you will

see how his shooting hand is so loose after the release it almost wraps around his guide hand. Talk about lateral movement. It actually touches his guide hand. This is a natural movement for thousands of people. We have to mentally force the avoidance of this detrimental movement. More on this in a later chapter. Reggie was a great shooter in spite of his wrist looseness. I shudder to think how much better he could have been had he known and respected the scientific laws that I portray. (get lifetime stats on reggie)

So, just remember that the past is history and the future is mystery. You must focus on the present moment with the emphasis on the word 'focus'. I have mentioned before that you should never, ever, ever, ever think of making the basket while the ball is still in your hand. Since each 'shot' has a life of it's own, each shot has to be consciously molded, formed or created.

The key principle here is that you do not want to be thinking of the ball entering the basket as you are pulling the trigger. Since the time is so short between raising the ball into the 'shot pocket' and the actual shot itself that if you really understand the scientific laws or natural principles then you will recognize that you have NO time to think of the end result. All your mental or cerebellic activity should be devoted to the specific mechanics necessary to achieve your goal(pun intended).

Once you understand what body part is responsible for causing the most errant shots then it makes sense to simply rectify, modify or completely remodel your shot.

While on this subject I must admit that this is a constant battle even with myself. The moment I shoot the ball at random with no conscious thought attached to that specific shot then the missed shot is my feedback. This immediately raises my thought process to a re-focus mode. Because I do not want to miss the next shot. Nobody does. It is a most humbling experience.

Another analogy, if I may, is that every time I leave my home I must not forget (a conscious thought) to tell my wife that I love her. The final thought generated an act which could be my last, because there is no guarantee that I would return home safely. She needs to know that I love her. The ball needs to know it belongs within the cylinder. Your new understanding generates a thought which is responsible for the specific action that is responsible for a true shot in every way. Each shot demands your total respect throughout the life cycle of the shot starting from the shot pocket to the final follow through. Otherwise the ball will get divorced from you. It needs YOU in totality.

Once you fully comprehend this fact you will understand that my own focus gets razor sharp in any competition simply because I absolutely can not afford to be mentally weak, lazy or indifferent on any shot. (Just like Life.)This only confirms to me that it is actually the mental toughness or the thought process that creates the confidence and success desired which can also leave very little room for failure. But remember this all comes from the initial accumulation of knowledge and the specific application of this knowledge.

Otherwise any knowledge gained and not applied can lead to the presumption that one has gained no knowledge from which to draw from.

There are many principles that I advocate for shooting perfection. And they all owe allegiance to scientific principles and natural laws. If you are involved in restructuring your shot then you have to retrain your subconscious thought first before you consciously apply the new information. Basically, free throw shooting has to start from the inside out. Most players today shoot the ball from outside in. Meaning that they just shoot the ball to what seems and feels natural to them, and just feeling natural is definitely not a cure for success.

Great shooting is a mechanical, robotic series of movements that must be duplicated. The more machine like you become the more success you will have. Now remember I am talking about complete control to the tune of not bending any more than 3 major joints namely the knee, elbow and wrist which all work as one unit. **NO JOINTS OR KNUCKLES IN THE HAND SHOULD EVER BEND. EVER.** More on this in a later chapter.